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Starrigavan ATV Trail

Management Plan

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Clemson Class of 1995

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Abstract

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Title: Starrigavan ATV Trail Management Plan

Abstract: The first managed motorized trail system on the Sitka Ranger District is under construction. This plan establishes trail management objectives, and lists action items to achieve the objectives.

Keywords: ATV, all-terrain vehicle, motorized trail, OHV, off-highway vehicle

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Executive Summary

Title: Starrigavan ATV Trail Management Plan

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The Starrigavan ATV Trail Management Plan was written to determine actions needed to manage a new motorized trail system. The plan establishes objectives, and provides recreation managers with direction for managing use, operations, and maintenance of the trail.

The trail system is currently under construction. It utilizes three miles of old logging road, and adds 2.7 miles of new construction. The new construction will transform the dead-end logging roads into a system of loop trails. When complete, the trail system will consist of 5.7 miles of ATV trail divided among three difficulty levels; a parking/training area; and a loading ramp.

There is strong public support for construction of this trail system. Currently, there are no trails or roads that may be legally used by the more than 200 ATV enthusiasts in

Sitka. As of January, 1997, the Sitka Recreational Vehicle Association (SRVA), a local group of ATV enthusiasts, has donated \$110,000 worth of heavy equipment and labor toward trail construction, and intend to continue to be partners in construction and management of the trails. The City and Borough of Sitka is a partner contributing use of land for the parking/training area and maintenance.

A unifying theme that runs throughout this plan is the importance of working with people. Many action items focus on involving ATV enthusiasts as well as interested non-riders. The plan emphasizes the importance of open and continuous communication, and providing information on trail etiquette and resource protection as critical to the success of the trail system.

The approach I used in developing this plan was to work with users, interested non-riders, and to review similar management plans used on other forests. I reviewed direction from the Forest Service Manual and the Tongass Land Management Plan. From these sources, I identified action items needed to have a well-run ATV trail system. As action items are implemented (such as a monitoring plan and volunteer position descriptions) they should be put together with this document to form a complete reference guide for the management of the Starrigavan ATV Trail.

1 Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to determine actions needed to manage the Starrigavan ATV Trail. The trail is partially constructed, and use is occurring. This plan will establish trail objectives and provide recreation managers with direction for managing use, operations, and maintenance of the trail.

ATV means all-terrain vehicle. An ATV is a single passenger vehicle designed for operation off paved roads. It has three or four low pressure tires, is 50 inches or less in width, and weighs less than 600 pounds.

Background

Sitka is a town of 8500, located on the shores of Baranof Island in southeast Alaska. The town is surrounded by the Tongass National Forest, and is isolated from other communities. Access to Sitka is by plane or boat, and the town has only 20 miles of roadway. Over the last 10 years, the recreational use of ATVs has grown in Sitka. This has caused problems for the community because there are no roads, trails or off-road areas that ATVs may legally use.

Presently, it is estimated there are over 200 ATV enthusiasts in Sitka. Most are age 13 to 20. With no established trail, riders use city streets, road shoulders, national forest campgrounds, picnic grounds, and trails. The results are noise disturbances in

neighborhoods, safety hazards from potential collisions between vehicles and riders, and resource damage in national forest recreation sites, trails, and other area parks.

In 1994, the decision was made by the Sitka District Ranger to design and construct a system of ATV trails in the Starrigavan Valley. The need and community support for this project was clearly demonstrated by the results of a district-wide recreation scoping effort conducted in March of 1994. The scoping was initiated to determine preferences of forest users for recreation developments within the Sitka Ranger District over the next five years. Comments were solicited from residents of Sitka, population 8500, and Tenakee Springs, population 95. A total of 176 responses were received. Of those, 146 responses urged development of an ATV trail. Because of such strong support, planning and design of the trail system began immediately.

Planning began with the development of a Design Narrative, a document that describes the project. The Design Narrative includes a site analysis, a conceptual site plan and a preliminary cost estimate. It describes why the project is being proposed, who the customers are, and what makes the project important. The proposal outlined in the Design Narrative became the proposed action for public scoping and an Environmental Analysis. With completion of the Environmental Analysis, the project moved into the final design phase. Standard specifications for trail and road construction were used. Using the designs and specifications, construction of the project began in May, 1995.

Description of the Starrigavan Valley and ATV Trail

Starrigavan Valley is located eight miles north of Sitka, at the end of Halibut Point Road. Starrigavan Recreation Area (Forest Service and Alaska State Parks), is located at the front of the valley and includes a campground, interpretive trails, picnic sites, and wildlife viewing decks. Nelson Logging Road provides access from Halibut Point Road up the valley to the city rifle range. Beyond the rifle range, three miles of old logging roads

continue to the head of the valley. The ATV Trail begins on the old logging roads just past the rifle range.

Most of Starrigavan Valley was clear-cut in the early 1970's. The second growth vegetation is thick stands of alder, western hemlock, and Sitka spruce about 20 years old, with dense salmonberry brush. Off the logging road it is very difficult to move through the area because of dense vegetation and logging slash.

Starrigavan Creek, a salmon stream, winds its way through the valley. Many small tributaries drain into Starrigavan Creek, some of which are salmon habitat. Pink, coho, and chum salmon, as well as steelhead, Dolly Varden, and cutthroat trout are present in Starrigavan Creek and its tributaries.

The majority of the proposed ATV trail is on National Forest land. About a quarter mile of trail lies on State of Alaska land, and the parking area is on State land leased to the City of Sitka. An easement to use these lands is being sought.

The ATV Trail will utilize all the existing logging roads, and add 2.7 miles of new trail construction. The new construction will transform the dead-end logging roads into a system of loop trails. When complete, the trail system will consist of 5.7 miles of ATV trail divided among three difficulty levels. A parking area, is being built large enough to conduct Safe ATV Rider courses, a program of the ATV Safety Institute. The parking area will include parking for 12 to 15 vehicles pulling ATV trailers, and a loading ramp.

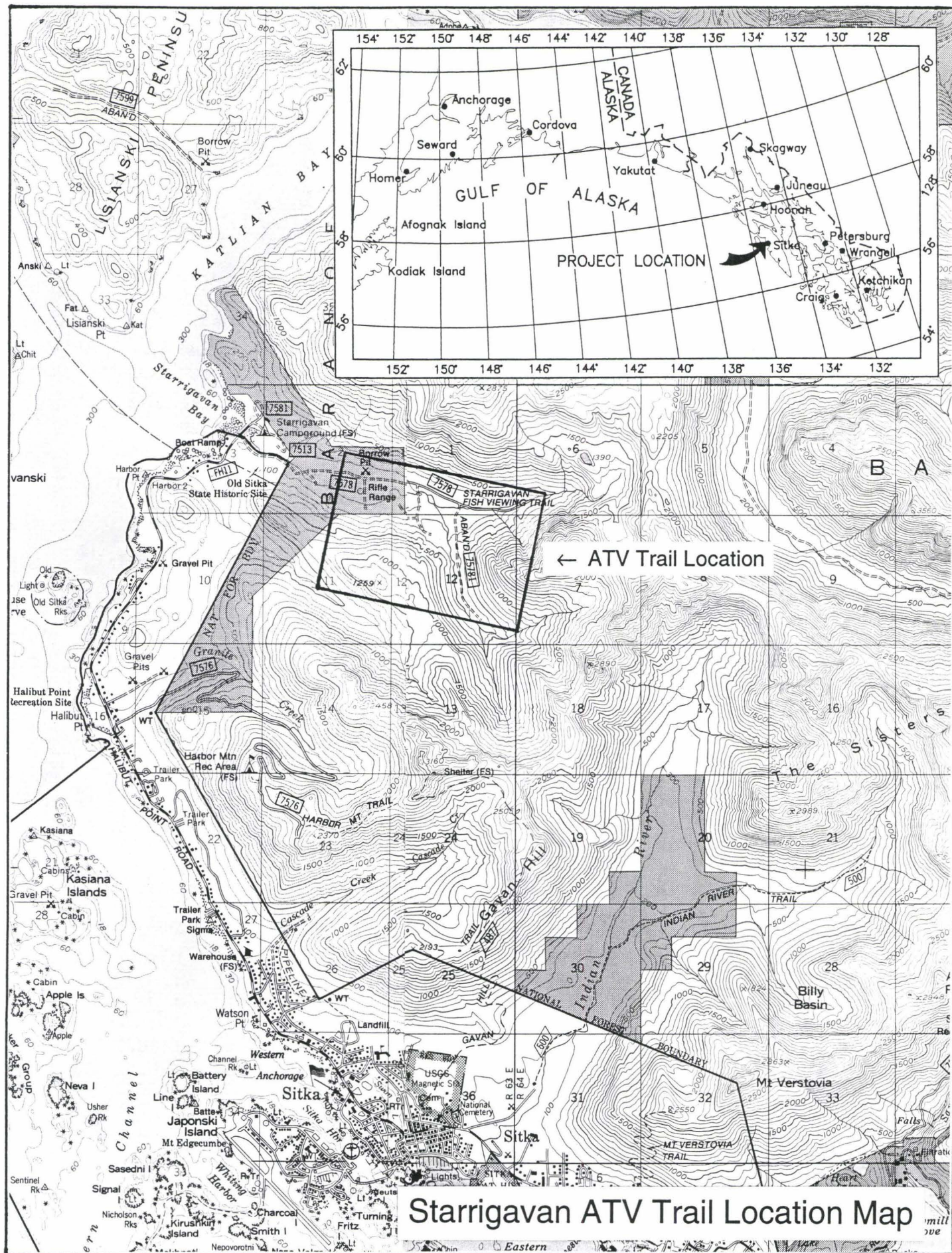
New trail sections will be built similar to a gravel road. Vegetation will be removed and buried under the traveled way. A base course of shot rock will be applied in areas of soft soil. Existing rocky soils will likely not need additional rock. Ditches will be dug along the trail where needed, and drainage structures installed at each stream or drainage channel. The drainage structure used would depend on the type of drainage, and would be either a culvert, dip armored with boulders, or a log culvert.

Guidelines that address grade, clearance, tread width, obstacles, and slideslope will be used to determine dimensions of the trail. These guidelines are listed in Forest Service Handbook 2309.18, Trails Management Handbook, section 2.32b, Exhibit 1.1, ATV Trail Guide (Appendix A). Some trail segments may be constructed to a wider width than specified. Standard size construction equipment is preferred for use over smaller size equipment for cost efficiency and ease of construction. In addition, the prevalence of large logging slash (logs up to four feet in diameter and stumps up to six feet in diameter) would likely make trail construction with smaller machines impossible. Using full size construction equipment would create a trail wider than specified, but these sections would be allowed to grow in with brush until they reach the desired width.

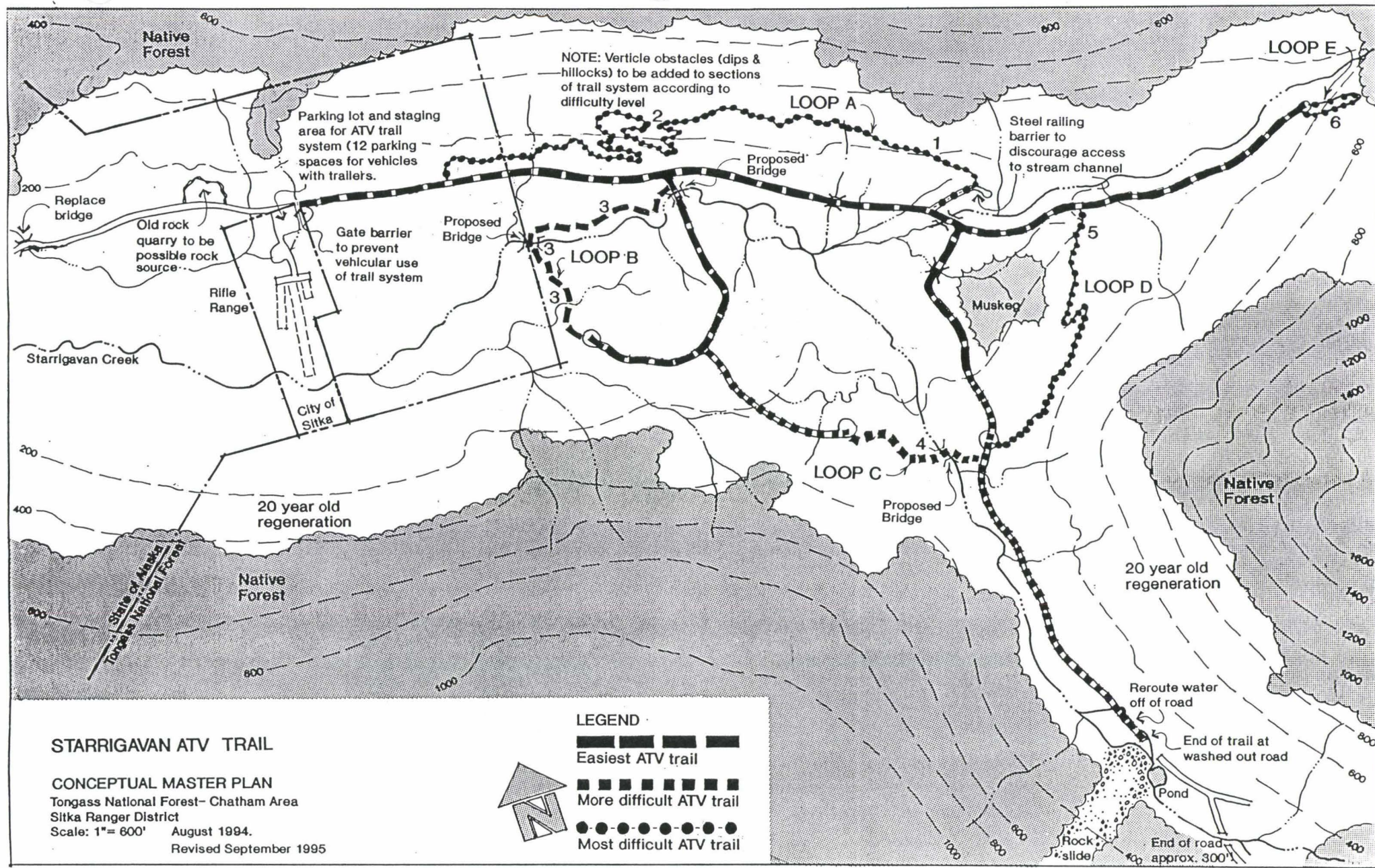
Work began on the ATV Trail in 1995. The parking/training area was cleared and partially surfaced, 0.7 miles of old logging road were cleared and rehabilitated, and several culverts installed. In 1996, 2.3 miles of logging road were reconstructed, the parking/training area was completed, and 500 feet of new trail (Loop A) was constructed. Nearly all the work was done by volunteers with their own heavy equipment. The Forest Service provided materials such as rock and culverts. Work planned for 1997 will focus on constructing Loops A & D, 1.75 miles.

Protecting fish habitat and water quality in Starrigavan Creek and its tributaries has been an important criteria in developing the trail system. The planners of the trail system worked closely with Sitka Ranger District biologists to coordinate trail locations and resource protection measures. Since 1986, biologists have worked to rehabilitate the Starrigavan watershed and improve juvenile salmon habitat with projects such as constructing large woody debris stream structures, thinning dense stands of trees within riparian areas, reducing road sedimentation, and seeding.

ATV riders are the predominant users of the existing trail. Motorcycle riders and snowmobilers use the area, but in much fewer numbers. Other users are berry pickers, deer hunters, pedestrians, mountain bikers, and cross-country skiers.



Starrigavan ATV Trail Location Map



Starrigavan ATV Trail Project Map

2 Literature Review

The earliest off-road vehicle management direction specific to the Sitka Ranger District was developed in the mid-1970's. The Off-Road Vehicle Environmental Analysis Report, Chatham Area, Tongass National Forest, was written in response to Executive Order 11644. The purpose of the Executive Order was to control and direct off-road vehicles on public lands for the protection of the resources. The Chatham Area Report focused on resource protection and established some closed and restricted areas within the Sitka Ranger District and elsewhere on the forest.

The Alaska Regional Guide, 1983, directed managers to "include off-road vehicle use in Forest land management plans and implement off-road vehicle use to minimize adverse effects on land and resources, promote public safety, and minimize conflicts with other uses of Alaska National Forest System lands". The Tongass Land Management Plan, Amended 1985-86, added no new direction for managing ORVs but listed the closures specified in the Chatham Area Report.

More recent direction on managing ORVs was reviewed in Forest Service Manual 2355, Off-Road Vehicle Use Management, 3/12/91. This comprehensive manual section not only addresses designating forest areas as closed or restricted for ORV use, but states as policy "Provide a diversity of off-road vehicle recreational opportunities...". Direction is given to develop forest programs for use of ORVs, provide the public with information on ORV use, establish monitoring plans, and develop ORV management direction with time schedules for implementation of action items.

A variety of papers and management plans addressing ORV use were obtained through the FS INFO library network. These were reviewed to determine applicable strategies for use at Starrigavan. The Off-Highway Vehicle Program, Strategic Plan 1994-1998 of the San Bernardino National Forest provided an upbeat, pro-active example of OHV management on a national forest.

3 Methodology

Personal knowledge of the ATV problems and needs in Sitka has served me well in developing this management plan. I have worked with ATV users for the past nine years, although until recently, mostly in a law enforcement capacity. With the planning and design of the Starrigavan ATV Trail in 1995, I began to work with ATV users as partners in planning and construction. I attended their meetings to discuss and gather input on trail location, construction techniques, and challenge levels. Users explained their need for more miles of trail, a variety of trail difficulty levels, and also their desire to work with the Forest Service to control vandalism and resource damage. Field visits were made by ATV riders to critique actual trail locations and adjustments were made to the final layout. As I worked with the users, I began to appreciate their desire for a recreation site where they may enjoy their sport in a safe and legal way. Working with users has given me the best input for developing this plan.

I have also worked with members of the community who have an interest in ATV management, but are not riders. These include representatives from the City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka Police Department, Alaska State Parks, and community members at large. These groups recognized that ATV riders need a place to ride. A meeting was held among these representatives to discuss concerns about current ATV use patterns

and consider options for ATV recreation. This meeting was held at about the same time as Sitka Ranger District's recreation public scoping and reinforced the need to develop a trail system. Soon afterward, Sitka Ranger District began planning the Starrigavan ATV Trail system.

Reviewing management plans from other forests has been valuable in providing ideas and strategies for management. In many cases problems are similar, such as resource protection, and established plans provide good direction on successful management techniques. Review of policy direction and guidelines contained in Forest Service manuals and handbooks helped assure that this plan would meet agency objectives.

I have combined my personal knowledge, input from users and interested non-riders, information from other management plans, and Forest Service direction to recommend a course of action items designed to manage the Starrigavan ATV Trail as a quality recreation site, while protecting the natural resources of the area.

4 Discussion

Goal and Objectives

The goal of this plan is to determine actions needed to manage use, operations, and maintenance of the Starrigavan ATV Trail. Within this goal are objectives to:

1. Provide a quality recreation opportunity.
2. Provide ATV user education that encourages safe and responsible operation of ATVs, and fosters users that are sensitive to the resources and who adhere to rules and regulations
3. Recruit partners to assist in maintenance and operations.
4. Gain consensus and support of the ATV Trail and management plan by other interested parties.

In order to accomplish these objectives, several tasks must be done. The following pages contain action items that have been developed to achieve the objectives. Some action items are a one time action, while others are ongoing or to be done annually.

The action items are arranged in the following categories: Managing ATV Use, Developing Partnerships, Community Involvement, Safety, Sign Plan, Maintenance, Law Enforcement, and Monitoring. A single action item may work toward achieving more than

one objective. For example, in the Developing Partnerships category is the action item "Establish regular attendance at SRVA meetings by the district ATV Trail coordinator". Accomplishing this action item would help provide a quality recreation opportunity (Objective 1) by allowing regular input by users on the construction and management of the ATV trail system. Regular attendance at SRVA meetings would also be a very useful way to recruit partners to assist in maintenance and operations of the ATV trail (Objective 3). There may also be an opportunity for the ATV trail coordinator to present responsible rider education at SRVA meetings (Objective 2). This action item relates to three of the four objectives. Action items are indicated with the $\Rightarrow$ symbol.

Managing ATV Use

To provide ATV riders a quality recreation opportunity, we need their input and cooperation. At the same time, some users need to gain an awareness of what it means to be a responsible ATV operator. Programs and activities to achieve good trail development and educate riders on riding opportunities, regulations and resources follow.

$\Rightarrow$ Continue to work with the Sitka Recreation Vehicle Association to design and construct the ATV Trail to meet user needs.

Completion Date: Ongoing

$\Rightarrow$ Make this management plan available to SRVA and other ATV riders for review and comment. Work with them to make sure their needs have been incorporated.

Completion Date: May, 1996

⇒ Make use of existing materials such as "Tread Lightly" brochures and videos, National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) publications about OHV club formation and responsible use, and "Right Rider" publications that address noise, wetlands, the environment and trail etiquette.

Completion Date

Ongoing

⇒ Develop a live program to inform users of trail regulations and resource protection needs at Starrigavan. This program would target the majority of riders, age 12 through 20, and would be presented at the high school, middle school, and teen center. The program could be scheduled each year as a regular part of ATV management. The Forest Service could work together with the Sitka Police Department to develop the presentation.

Completion Date:

October, 1997

⇒ Develop a fact sheet for users that includes a map of the trail system, regulations, and a brief interpretive message about fish habitat, wetland resource protection, and ongoing watershed rehabilitation activities.

Completion Date

September, 1997

⇒ Develop a display or poster that addresses responsible ATV use, a map of the trail system and regulations. This would be displayed at the local ATV dealership, the high school, middle school, teen center, and other

appropriate locations. A supply of the ATV Trail fact sheets would be part of the display or poster.

Completion Date September, 1997

⇒ Design, fabricate, and install a trailhead sign that includes a map of the trail system, regulations, partner recognition, and a brief interpretive message about fish habitat, wetland resource protection and watershed rehabilitation activities. The sign should use vandal resistant materials, be inexpensive to fabricate, and be easily removed from its mount for replacement.

Completion Date June, 1997
(funding dependent)

⇒ Install posters (already printed, see Appendix) at locations where ATV riders are accessing stream channels. The posters have a brief message encouraging riders to preserve salmon habitat.

Completion Date May, 1996

Recruiting & Working with Partners

Construction of the ATV Trail would not be possible without partners and volunteers. Likewise, maintenance and operations of the trail will not be possible without partners. Trail users especially need to be involved in the regular upkeep of the facilities because this is their trail system. Users working with the Forest Service have the power to make

the trail system the best it can be. The Forest Service has the obligation to encourage and enable partners to actively be involved in caring for the trail. We can do that with these action items:

⇒ Meet with established partners to formalize working relationships through volunteer or partnership agreements. Partners that are working with the Forest Service now are the Sitka Recreation Vehicle Association, and the City and Borough of Sitka.

Completion Date May, 1997

⇒ Develop a volunteer needs list and position descriptions to fill those needs.

Completion Date September, 1997

⇒ Develop a volunteer recruitment plan. Recruit SRVA members, non-member ATV enthusiasts, and interested people or groups to fill the volunteer positions on the needs list. Provide volunteer opportunities for youth.

Completion Date October, 1997

⇒ Establish regular attendance at SRVA meetings by the district ATV Trail coordinator.

Completion Date April, 1997

⇒ Conduct volunteer training annually. This would include information about the National Forest and its management, information about trail etiquette, regulations, fish habitat and wetland protection. Safe ATV Rider courses would be available for volunteers who had not been through the course.

Completion Date

Annually in April

⇒ Provide annual volunteer recognition, such as awards, certificates, and media releases.

Completion Date

Annually in Fall

Community Involvement

ATV use, and misuse, is a community wide issue in Sitka. Because of the lack of a legal place to ride, combined with the irresponsible riding behavior of a few enthusiasts, a poor public attitude toward ATV recreation exists. Many people have concerns about the noise and environmental damage that may be caused by ATVs.

For the ATV Trail to be successful it must have public support. The image of ATV users needs to be improved. Motorized trail riding is a legitimate use of national forest land and a recreation activity enjoyed by many people. A more desirable image of ATV riding would be: an activity attractive to many responsible, informed users of all ages, who are sensitive to natural resources and who adhere to rules and regulations in place. Programs and activities will be developed to inform and educate interested groups of the positive recreation value of ATV riding. Actions to achieve this change in attitude follow.

⇒ Identify target groups whose support is desired.

Completion Date: May, 1997

Groups already identified are the Sitka Police Department, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Sitka Sportsmans' Association, Alaska State Parks, the City and Borough of Sitka, and interested Sitkans.

⇒ Request review and input of this management plan by the target groups.

Work with the groups to make sure their needs have been incorporated.

Completion Date: May, 1997

⇒ Have media coverage of events and programs used to teach responsible ATV use.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Safety

The activity of riding ATVs can hold certain risks to inexperienced, careless, or daredevil riders. Safety problems may arise from the user's lack of familiarity concerning dangers of back-country travel and from conflicts among user groups. Actions follow that will improve the safety of ATV riders and other trail users.

⇒ Work with local ATV dealers, enthusiasts, and the ATV Safety Institute to set up Safe ATV Rider courses that would be available to all ATV riders.

Completion Date December, 1997

⇒ Develop regulations and special orders that encourage safe riding habits.

Completion Date April, 1997

⇒ Provide maps, gate key, and trail info to Search and Rescue and Sitka Police.

Completion Date September, 1996

⇒ Inspect the trail for maintenance needs regularly to prevent safety hazards.

Completion Date Annually

⇒ Mark the difficulty of each trail segment and identify hazards with signs.

Completion Date August, 1997

Sign Plan

Four types of signs are needed on the ATV Trail system.

1. Resource protection signs. Stream channels and banks are most susceptible to damage. Two posters have already been designed and printed that encourage riders to stay out of stream channels and preserve salmon habitat. These will be posted at areas where ATVs are accessing stream channels. Other resources to monitor that may be damaged by ATV misuse are soils eroded by off-trail riding, and cutting or damaging live trees. Signing may be warranted to help reduce these problems.
2. Trail difficulty level markers. The trail system has three levels of difficulty: easiest, more difficult, and most difficult. Markers should be placed at trail intersections and along each trail to identify the difficulty level.
3. Hazard warnings. These include object markers on gates and bridge abutment. Any unusual or unexpected hazard should also be marked.
4. Entrance sign. This is an orientation sign for the trail system. It will show trail routes, define trail difficulty levels, and list regulations. Trail etiquette and resource protection messages will be posted. Partners will be recognized here, and a space for riders to post messages will be provided. Special Orders would be displayed here as well. The sign should use vandal resistant materials, be inexpensive to fabricate, and easily removed from its mount for replacement.

Maintenance

Parking/training area - Once construction of the parking/training area is complete, it can be registered with the ATV Safety Institute as a training area. In addition to holding training classes there, the Institute will provide maintenance, such as annual grading.

⇒ Submit registration paperwork when the parking area is nearing completion.

Completion Date

August, 1996

Additional maintenance should be sought through an existing road maintenance agreement with the City and Borough of Sitka. The City has heavy equipment and operators, and will likely be using the parking area for rifle range users.

⇒ Modify the Forest Road Agreement between USDA Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, and City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, #92-334CA to include maintenance of the ATV parking/training area.

Completion Date

August, 1997

Twice monthly (or more often) litter pickup will be necessary at the parking area to keep it looking good. The SRVA has said they are interested in keeping the parking area clean, and providing and emptying a garbage can. This should be part of the volunteer agreement scheduled to be prepared in May, 1996.

Trails - Trails should be graded and brushed every two years. The SRVA, ATV riders, and the Forest Service should share this responsibility. It is preferable to let the brush grow in somewhat to meet the clearing standards in the FS Trails Handbook (Appendix). The trails have been built with full-sized road building equipment and are wider than trail specifications. The trails may need to be maintained at a wider than trail width to allow grading by heavy equipment, but the smallest equipment available should be used.

⇒ Organize trail brushing and grading every two years using FS crews, contract, SRVA, and volunteers.

Completion Date

ongoing

Bridges - There are three existing log stringer bridges within the trail system, and three bridges scheduled to be constructed. The existing bridges were inspected in April 1995 and found to have load ratings of 45 tons or more each. The existing bridges are scheduled to be inspected every two years. New bridges will be inspected every two years after construction. Inspections are done by engineering, and need to be scheduled in advance.

⇒ Work with engineers to schedule regular bridge inspections.

Completion Date

October, 1997

Signs - Presently, the area including the rifle range and ATV Trail is subject to frequent vandalism. It is expected that vandalism will lessen once more of the trail is complete and volunteers are in place to work with users. It is difficult to know at this time how much vandalism will occur to signs. In general, signs are an easy and popular target for

vandals. Signing in the parking/training area should be checked weekly, and trail signing every two months. This schedule should be modified as needed to insure signs are in place.

Law Enforcement

⇒ Develop regulations that protect resources from damage or misuse by trail users. Develop regulations that encourage safe riding practices. Create Special Orders to enable regulations to be enforced.

Completion Date

July, 1997

⇒ Schedule Forest Service law enforcement patrols to spot check compliance with regulations. Ideally, the patrols should be done using ATVs.

Completion Date

August, 1996

⇒ Work with volunteers and trail users to encourage support and enforcement of regulations. This would be part of the annual spring volunteer training, and part of the activities listed in the Managing ATV Use section to help users ride responsibly.

Monitoring

Monitoring is required in the Tongass Land Management Plan, as amended 1985-86, and in the Proposed Revised Forest Plan, August 1991. The Proposed Plan specifically addresses monitoring off-road vehicle use and will be used for guidance in this ATV management plan. The Proposed Forest Plan asks the monitoring question: "Is off-road vehicle (ORV) use causing, or will it cause, considerable adverse effects on soil, water, vegetation, fish and wildlife, visitors, or cultural and historic resources of the Forest?" The action to be measured is whether or not an off-road vehicle plan exists which would have a section that considers adverse effects on resources. This ATV management plan, therefore, is the tool specified for monitoring compliance with the Proposed Forest Plan.

A site specific monitoring plan for the Starrigavan ATV Trail needs to be developed. The purpose of the monitoring plan is 1.) to determine if the objectives of the Starrigavan ATV Trail are being met; and 2.) to determine if unacceptable adverse effects are occurring.

⇒ Develop a monitoring plan for the Starrigavan ATV Trail.

Completion Date

December, 1997

5 Recommendation & Plan Implementation

This plan outlines the steps needed to have a well-run ATV trail system at Starrigavan. However, much work remains to be done. The plan should be approved and signed by the District Ranger. An ATV trail coordinator should be assigned with the responsibility of actively pursuing the action items. As progress is made on the action items, they should be documented and put together with this plan. A three-ring binder could be set up to contain all of the ATV management tools, such as the volunteer position descriptions and monitoring plan, as they are developed. The binder would be a useful reference document for day-to-day operations, as well as the place where the overall objectives for managing the trail would be found.

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Appendix

FSH 2309.18 - TRAILS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK
 WO AMENDMENT 2309.18-91-2
 EFFECTIVE 11/8/91

2.32b - Exhibit 01

ATV TRAIL (three-wheel/four-wheel vehicle) Guide

	Easiest	More Difficult	Most Difficult
<u>Grade</u>			
Max. Sustained	15%	25%	35%
Length	200'	300'	500'
Max. Pitch	20%	30%	50%
<u>Clearance (One-Way traffic)</u>			
Wooded			
Downhill side	2'	1.5'	1.0'
Uphill side	3'	3'	3'
Level	3.1' each side	2.6' each side	2.5' each side
Open			
Downhill side	2'	1.5'	1.0'
Uphill side	3'	3'	3'
Level	3.1' each side	2.6' each side	2.4' each side
Height	6'	6'	5'
<u>Treadl/</u>			
Width			
Minimum	6.2'	5.2'	4.8'
Maximum	7.2'	6.2'	5.8'
Surface	Relatively smooth, no roots or rocks protruding more than 3", tread plane flat, sweeping curves, no holes wider than 24" nor deeper than 6", loose sand is okay.	Section of relatively rough surface, no roots or rocks protruding more than 3", tread plane can be insloped 5% max, climbing turns, no holes wider than 36" nor deeper than 6". Loose sand is okay.	Relatively rough w/very rough short sections, no protruding rocks 3", tread plain can be insloped or outsloped 10% max, switchbacks, few sections with holes wider than 36" and deeper than 6".

2.32b - Exhibit 01--Continued

<u>Obstacles</u> ^{2/}			
(Optional)	Wet xings 6" deep 10' long max, draindips okay, no waterbars.	Wet xings 10" deep 25' long, waterbars downhill okay.	Same as More Difficult except waterbars may be uphill and down- hill.
Few small logs less than 8" diameter.			
<u>Exposure (Sideslope)</u>			
	0% to 20%	20% to 30%	30% to 40%
Length	Less than 300'	300' to 500'	More than 500'
<u>Traffic Flow</u>			
	One-way, or two- way with turnouts	One-way, or two- way with turnouts	One-way, or two- way with turnouts
<u>Length of Trip</u>			
One-half day	3 miles	10 miles	15 miles
Full day	6 miles	20 miles	30 miles
<u>Turns per</u>			
<u>1/4 mile</u>	2	6	11

- 1/ Increase tread width 6 inches on switchbacks or where side slopes exceed 30 percent.
2/ Avoid any type of sharp peaks in vertical alignment.



NO THRILLS FOR OUR GILLS!

**Driving in the stream
is harmful to eggs,
rearing and spawning fish.**

***PLEASE STAY ON
THE DESIGNATED
TRAIL.***



P-1066



J. L. DARLING CORP.



***PLEASE KEEP
YOUR TRACKS
OFF OUR BACKS!***

***Critical spawning and
rearing habitat for fish.***



P-1887

J. E. DARLING CORP.
POB 308-1714



Sitka Ranger District Future Recreation Projects



Dear Forest Users:

During the winter of 1990/91 the Sitka Ranger District completed a recreation scoping project to identify and prioritize 1990-1995 recreation plans. During this process the Sitka District received over 70 responses from interested people. Following are the accomplishments of the last several years, and the volunteer groups who made them possible:

Moser Island cabin - Harbor Department employees and Sitka volunteers organized by Brian Bergman

Seven Fathom Bay cabin - A group of volunteers from Sitka organized by Warren Pellet

North Beach Shellkoff ORV cabin and trail - U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Sitka, Coast Guard employees, and a group of Sitka volunteers led by Kermit Whittemore

Samsing Cove cabin - Constructed and donated by Roger and Judy Sudnikovich

Allan Point cabin - Shiskenue District of the Boy Scouts of America, Roger and Judy Sudnikovich, Sheldon Jackson College students, U.S. Coast Guard employees, Sitka High National Honor Society, Boy Scout Troop 41, Boy Scout Troop 44, City and Borough of Sitka employees, Alaska State Parks employees, Sitka Harbor employees and local Sitka volunteers led by Brian Bergman

Kakul Narrows shelter - Alaska Pulp Corporation and local Sitka residents

North Neva survival shelter - Sitka Volunteer Fire Department, Sitka Volunteer Search and Rescue

U.S. Coast Guard employees

Gavan Hill hut - U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Sitka, Sitka Volunteer Fire Department, Sitka Volunteer Search and Rescue

Beaver Lake trail extension - Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Harbor Mt./Gavan Hill trail reconstruction

Starrigavan Trails - Alaska State Parks, State Parks Advisory Board

Starrigavan picnic shelter - Filipino Community of Sitka, Alaska Pulp Corporation

Starrigavan four stall restroom - University of Alaska Southeast

Mooring buoys at recreation cabins - Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Improvements on the Harbor Mt. Road Including additional parking and widening switch backs.

Indian River Trailhead - Sheldon Jackson College, City and Borough of Sitka, Sitka High School shop class

Salmon Lake cabin - Donated by Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Gavan Hill trail head - City and Borough of Sitka, Boy Scout Troop 45

Projects that will be completed in 1994

include construction of a cabin at Piper Island in Fish Bay, a survival shelter on Otstola Island in Hoonah Sound, a footbridge across Shellkoff river, and installation of mooring buoys at Moser Island cabin, Seven Fathom Bay cabin, Allan Point cabin, Piper Island cabin, and North Neva survival shelter. The City and Borough of Sitka, in partnership with the Forest Service will construct a restroom

facility at Sandy Beach. At Starrigavan, a bird viewing shelter will be constructed and interpretive signing and brochures placed on site. The new campground entrance road and parking lot will also be completed at Starrigavan this winter. We are very proud of what has been accomplished!

Future recreation projects that are being planned include replacing the Salmon Lake recreation cabin, expanding the Starrigavan Campground, constructing an accessible fishing pier at Starrigavan, a foot bridge across Starrigavan creek, reconstruct the Mt. Edgumbe trail, construct an ORV bridge across Iris Creek to provide access to new North Beach cabin, and reconstructing the first part of the Gavan Hill trail up through the first muskeg to make the trail accessible to all levels of ability.

Four years have elapsed since we updated our recreation project list and the Sitka Ranger District has decided it is time to do an update. We are undertaking this planning effort to decide what recreation projects to work on during the next 5 to 10 years. Determining what the public wants in the way of recreation projects is the goal of this scoping process. If public recreation is important to you, please take the time to let us know how we can improve your recreation experience on National Forest lands. We are interested in hearing about your ideas for new and/or improved recreation facilities (where they should go, and even where they should not go)

A public meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23, in the Maksoutoff Room, Centennial Building to review accomplishments from the last five years, discuss this planning effort, compile a list of potential recreation projects, and take comments and ideas. We will publish a new

priority list in May after the written comments are received. Following are some potential projects:

Facilities

CABINS - Construct recreation cabins in the following locations:

- 1) Redoubt Bay
- 2) Krestof Sound/Sukoi Inlet
- 3) Cold Storage Lake
- 4) Leesoffskala Bay/Aleutkina Bay area
- 5) Sitka alpine cabin - Construct an alpine cabin accessible by hiking from Sitka.
- 6) Emmons Island (Hoonah Sound)
- 7) Kelp Bay

SHELTERS - Construct Adirondak shelters for emergency use in the following locations:

- 1) Taigud Islands - near Redoubt Bay
- 2) Mud Bay

Trails

- 1) Sadie Lake trail - This trail is in bad shape and needs to be reconstructed.
- 2) Construct a loop trail from Mud Bay to Brents Beach to Freds Creek to Shoals Point to Mt. Edgumbe to Shellkoff. The trail would emphasize geology and the volcanic history of Kruzof Island.
- 3) Lucky Chance - At the head of Silver Bay. Rebuild and mark trail and provide interpretive signing.
- 4) Trail across Baranof Island
- 5) Beaver Lake trail - Complete the fishing access trail around Beaver Lake

Sitka Area Developments

- 1) Starrigavan Valley - Develop an ORV and/or mountain bike trail in upper Starrigavan valley.
- 2) Develop a mountain bike trail in the Sitka area in cooperation with the City and Borough of Sitka.
- 3) Harbor Mountain - Expand recreation opportunities on Harbor Mountain. Proposed developments include constructing interpretive trails, cross country ski trail, picnic shelter, and increasing parking and picnic sites.
- 4) Harbor Mountain Road - upgrade road to improve sight distance and safety.

- 5) Construct a Forest Service visitor information center in Sitka.

- 6) Sawmill Creek Campground - Expand and improve Sawmill Creek campground.

Miscellaneous

- 1) Mud Bay - Construct a dock with ORV off-loading facilities.
- 2) Fish Bay hot springs - Develop the hot springs and upgrade the trail.
- 3) Commercial Lodge - Locate a site and provide the opportunity to develop a commercial hunting/fishing lodge on National Forest lands.
- 4) Improve boat moorage at Freds Creek cabin. Consider rock bolt/shore ties or seasonal dock.
- 5) Baranof Warm Springs - Work with the City of Sitka to develop public hot tubs.

South Baranof Wilderness

- 1) There has been a lot of interest in providing a recreation cabin or survival shelter along the west side of the wilderness area. Sites have been proposed at Still Harbor, Port Banks and/or Yamani Islands. This would improve safety for small boats that have to wait for weather to improve before making "outside" crossings.

West Chichagof Wilderness

- 1) A survival shelter or recreation cabin has been proposed for Ford Arm or the Biard Island area. This would improve safety for small boats that have to wait for weather to improve before making "outside" crossings.
- 2) Replace the Goulding Lake trail bridge.
- 3) Construct a small boat portage from Double Cove to Sister Lake.

The Forest Service is interested in your ideas. If you would like to visit in person or have the Forest Service make a presentation to your group, call us!

Your comments and ideas should be sent to James S. Franzel, District Ranger, Sitka Ranger District, 201 Katlian, S-109, Sitka, AK 99835. The phone number is 747-6671. Comments should be received by April 18, 1994, to be considered in this analysis.

Sincerely,

JAMES S. FRANZEL
District Ranger

The Sitka Ranger District is interested in hearing your thoughts and suggestions for future recreation projects. This partial list of issues was developed as a starting point, phrased as questions, to help generate your ideas. Please comment on the previously listed ideas and any other ideas that you would like to see considered.

- 1) What specific kinds of recreation projects would you like to see developed and where would you prefer them to be located?

- 2) Where, and what kind, of recreation projects would you like to see developed? Where would you not like to see recreation projects developed?

- 3) What is your priority for projects?

- 4) If you are interested in being kept up to date on this project, please provide us with your name and address.

Return by April 18, 1994 to Sitka Ranger District,
201 Katlian, S-109, Sitka, AK 99835.

United States	Forest	Alaska Region	Sitka Ranger District
Department of	Service	Tongass National Forest	201 Katlian, Suite 109
Agriculture		Chatham Area	Sitka, Alaska 99835
			(907) 747-6671

Reply To: 1950

Date: December 1, 1994

DEAR FOREST USER:

The Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Sitka Ranger District, is currently conducting an analysis for a proposed ATV (All-Terrain Vehicle) trail in the Starrigavan valley. The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the project and to request your comments on the proposed ATV trail as part of the scoping phase of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation process.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to provide a safe, legal place for ATV riders to operate in Sitka. Presently, there are no places where riders may legally operate that are accessible from the Sitka road system. The only exception is on Harbor Mountain (National Forest) during the snow months of December through March. With a steady rise in the number of ATV owners and enthusiasts in Sitka and no established trails, riders are using illegal and unsafe areas. The results are noise disturbances in neighborhoods, safety hazards, and resource damage. With the establishment of a designated area for ATV use, disturbances and resource damage in other areas should be reduced. Additionally, by forming a cooperative relationship between land management agencies and rider groups, resource abuse and vandalism may be reduced in the Starrigavan valley.

Location

The project site, Starrigavan valley, is located 7.5 miles northeast of Sitka. The valley is near the end of Halibut Point Road which is the northern terminus of Sitka's road system. Starrigavan Recreation Area, which includes a campground, interpretive trails, picnic sites, and wildlife viewing decks is located in the front of the valley. The Nelson Logging Road provides access from Halibut Point Road to the proposed ATV trail entrance located about one mile up the valley at the rifle range road intersection. Because most of the valley was harvested in the early 1970's, old logging roads provide access to the head of the valley. However, due to severe road erosion just east of the rifle range, only ATV's can access the upper valley.

The majority of the proposed trail is on National Forest Land. Approximately a quarter mile of trail lies on State of Alaska land, and the proposed parking area is on City of Sitka leased land. Approval to use these lands will be sought through the appropriate channels and may be in the form of a right-of-way permit, lease, easement, or cooperative agreement.

This project is a partnership between the Forest Service, SRVA (Sitka Recreational Vehicle Association), and other interested groups, businesses, and individuals who may contribute funds, labor, or materials. The size of this project requires it to be implemented over several years. Partners and funding levels from year to year will determine which parts and how much of the trail are to be constructed annually.

Proposed Action

Currently, ATV riders use the existing logging roads which consist of three miles of main and spur road. This ATV trail plan proposes to utilize the existing logging roads, and to add 2.7 miles of new trail construction. The new construction will transform the dead-end logging roads into a system of loop trails. Three riding difficulty levels would be represented with hill climbs and vertical obstacles (dips and hillocks) added according to the Forest Service ATV trail guidelines for each level.

Starrigavan Creek along with numerous tributaries is located within the proposed project area. Where it is necessary to cross streams, bridges or appropriate sized culverts would be placed over the stream channels to protect salmon habitat and water quality. If necessary, barriers would be placed near the stream crossings to prevent riders from driving into sensitive stream channels. Existing resource damage from ATV's would be rehabilitated and problem areas would be barricaded to prevent future damage. Existing garbage and junked cars would also be removed from the valley during construction.

Potential positive effects of the ATV trail project are: providing a safe, legal place for ATV riders in Sitka; providing ATV education opportunities; and rehabilitating existing resource damage. Potential negative impacts of this project are: human disturbance of wildlife; impacts of increasing number of users to the area; and possible conflicts with existing uses, such as hunting in the valley, and berry picking along the roads.

We encourage you to comment on this project and identify issues which may be of concern to you. Please try to be specific when identifying a concern. Comments are welcome at any time; however to be most useful, comments should be received by December 17, 1994. Maps of the proposed trails are available for review at the Sitka Ranger District office. Please send comments to Sheila Jacobson, Sitka Ranger District, Tongass National Forest, 201 Katlian Street, Suite 109, Sitka, AK 99835. Also, we welcome your phone calls and faxes. The telephone number is 747-6671 and fax number is 747-4253.

Sincerely,

JAMES S. FRANZEL
District Ranger

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